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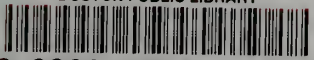
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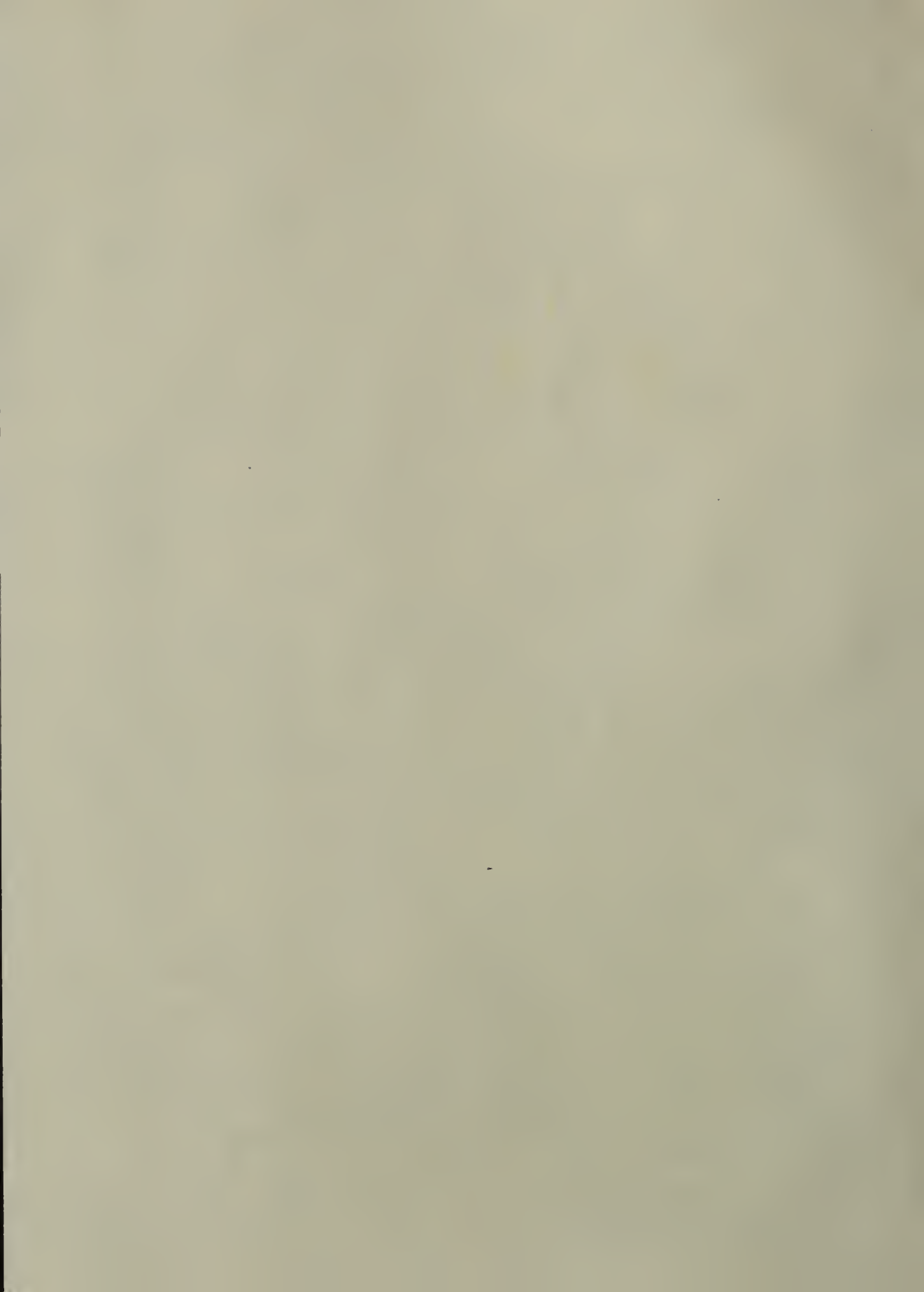


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THE  
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**PLAN**

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## FRAMEWORK FOR THE PLAN

For more than 200 years the fate of Boston Harbor and the region have been intertwined. The vitality of the waterfront fueled the growth of Boston as a center of international commerce from the eighteenth to the early twentieth century. In the middle of this century, rotting piers and empty warehouses accelerated Boston's economic decline.

In the last two decades, as Boston reemerged as the center of a vibrant New England economy, parts of the waterfront were rediscovered as sites for new offices and luxury housing. However, many of these new developments cut the city off from the harbor, displaced water-dependent businesses, and did not benefit the residents of the city. Pressures to continue this trend grew stronger as the city's economy boomed in the early 1980s. The Harborpark Plan has been developed to ensure that new development on the harbor is managed in a way that protects the waterfront's unique resources while ensuring that all residents have access to benefits created by waterfront revitalization.

The plan is the result of a five-year planning process which began in 1984 when the Flynn Administration established the Harborpark Advisory Committee, a 15-member group which included representatives of key harbor constituencies, including the neighborhoods that surround the harbor. Since its inception, the HPAC has held more than xxx public meetings to seek information and provide enlightened council to the Mayor and the BRA. In March 1987, at the request of the committee, the city created an Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD) for the waterfront. The IPOD established temporary zoning standards for two years while a permanent zoning plan was created for Boston's waterfront.



## Goals of the Plan

The Harborpark Plan has been developed to achieve three primary goals.

First, the plan must guarantee public access to the waterfront's unique opportunities for recreation, economic opportunities, and housing.

Second, the plan should protect and enhance the waterfront's maritime-related businesses which need access to deep-water shipping channels in the harbor.

Third, the plan has to manage growth so that appropriately-designed, mixed-use development occurs on the waterfront and that the benefits of that development are shared by the residents of all of the city's neighborhoods.

## Elements of the Plan

To ensure that future development meets these goals, the members of the Harborpark Advisory Committee, neighborhood and advocacy groups, and city and state agencies have spent thousands of hours creating permanent guidelines for waterfront development in Boston. This bottom-up planning process has resulted in a ten-point program for balanced growth on Boston's historic waterfront. The program will:

**Preserve** approximately one-third of the waterfront for open space and recreational opportunities.

**Create Harborwalk**, a more than 20-mile continuous waterfront walkway that will stretch from East Boston to Dorchester.



Establish Maritime Economy Reserve Districts which preserve about one-third of the waterfront for deep-water shipping and other water-dependent uses.

Guide the expansion of the downtown service economy and the growth of housing opportunities into appropriately-scaled buildings on carefully-selected waterfront sites.

Reconnect neighborhoods to the harbor and to the city through separate planning processes for the Charlestown Navy Yard, the Fort Port Channel area, East Boston, the North End, Dorchester, and the Port Norfolk neighborhood.

Reestablish an extensive water transportation system in Boston Harbor and improve transportation access to new waterfront developments without creating adverse impacts on nearby neighborhoods.

Establish height limits and design guidelines so that new waterfront development is appropriately scaled and improves visual and physical connections between neighborhoods and the waterfront.

Generate a number of benefits for Bostonians including xx dollars in new tax revenues, xx housing linkage funds, xx in jobs linkage funds, xx permanent jobs and xx temporary jobs a year.



Protect and enhance the harbor's natural environment by locating and designing buildings in ways that do not generate excessive winds and shadows, by discouraging the use of automobiles to access the waterfront, and by improving the water quality of Boston Harbor.

Create a new neighborhood-based review process for waterfront developments.

### The Context for Planning

4 The Harborpark District Plan's goals and components balance the economic health of the city and its inner social life. The social health is aided by developing places where people can gather for social events, recreation, or the quiet enjoyment of life and nature. The economic health is encouraged by policies that support balanced growth on the waterfront.

5 The plan's policies will also reconnect the city's neighborhoods and the water. The policies also reattach the neighborhoods with each other and with the downtown office district. These efforts will complete a process begun by Frederick Law Olmsted almost 100 years ago when he planned an "Emerald Necklace" which was to run from downtown, through new residential neighborhoods such as the Back Bay, Jamaica Plain, and Roxbury, ending at Castle Island in South Boston.

6 The plan's policies directing economic growth to appropriate areas is necessary because the waterfront has the potential to provide up to one-third of the 10,000 new jobs a year and the thousands of housing units that demographers project





will be created in Boston by the turn of the century. The plan will direct that growth to appropriate locations. Through programs such as jobs and housing linkage programs, the plan also ensures that all residents of the city have access to economic opportunities created by waterfront development.

7 The rejuvenation of the harbor will also strengthen the New England economy which historically has depended on the port of Boston. Insuring that New England manufacturers have access to a deep-water port will make it easier for those manufacturers to compete in the international marketplace.

\* Finally, it is important to note that the plan is the result of an open community-based planning process. The central premise of this process is that all knowledge about what is best with the city does not reside with the government. Instead, plans work best when they are fashioned by the community. In particular, this plan responds to community issues such as the need to promote appropriate land uses along the waterfront, to protect residential areas from encroachment by commercial uses, and to provide more open space and public access.

### Models for Development

New development has been occurring on the waterfront while the Harborpark Plan has been crafted. This new development has been a testing ground for the plan's fundamental principles and policies. Completed projects and those under construction therefore are examples of how the Harborpark concept is being translated into action.



The Rowes Wharf mixed-use complex includes offices, a hotel, new residences, public walking and sitting areas, and new water transportation facilities in a well-designed and appropriately-scaled new building. The project has also generated significant funds for affordable housing and job training as well as new tax revenues for the city.

The proposed redevelopment of Sargents Wharf will create significant amounts of new affordable housing and open space for North End residents. The revitalization of the Charlestown Navy Yard has been a model for mixed-use development which includes offices, mixed-income housing, open space, and new water transportation facilities. Plans for Long Wharf will create a terminus for the Walk to the Sea, a major new park, new water transportation terminals and a public docking area for pleasure boats. Clippership Wharf, a housing development in East Boston, is another good example of a well-designed building with significant open space that also includes affordable housing.

Current Harborwalk planning efforts are focussed on the 15.25 mile segment which will circle the Inner Harbor, extending from the Charlestown Navy Yard to the South Boston waterfront. Since the Harborpark planning process was launched, 6.62 miles (42 percent) of this segment have been completed. Another 5.83 miles (38 percent) are either under construction or under review.

New open space and recreation facilities include the Courageous Sailing Center and Shipyard Park in the Charlestown Navy Yard, the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Rose Garden on the downtown waterfront, and the planned East Boston waterfront park and lobsterman's terminal.



All told, about 4000 dwelling units, which can house more than 12,000 people, have either been built, are under construction, or are planned at nine sites in the Harborpark area. About 20 percent of these units will be affordable.

Harborpark projects have also produced more than \$5 million in housing linkage payments which have been used to build affordable housing. New development projects have also already generated more than \$6 million in new tax revenues for the city.

In addition, since the beginning of the Harborpark program millions of dollars have also been invested in new water transportation facilities at sites such as the Charlestown Navy Yard, Rowes Wharf, Long Wharf, Logan Airport, Commonwealth Pier, and the Schrafft Center.

In addition, the planned depression of the Central Artery will remove a barrier between the city and the waterfront and create significant new public areas near the waterfront. Similarly, the new Seaport Access Road in South Boston has the potential to open up the South Boston waterfront to appropriate development without created<sup>ing</sup> adverse traffic impacts on nearby residential areas. New open space can also be created by the South Boston road.

#### Implementation

11 The components of the Harborpark Plan are being implemented through a variety of public and private initiatives.

12 A major focus of the planning effort has been to update the harbor's more than 20-year old zoning policies. The Harborpark District Zoning Plan sets aside more



than 700 acres of waterfront land as open space and creates height, mass, use, and design review guidelines. The open space guidelines and design review requirements will guarantee that new waterfront development is in character with the existing waterfront uses and is compatible with nearby residential areas. For example, under the plan, most new waterfront buildings will be about five-to-seven stories tall, the historic height limits for the waterfront and nearby neighborhoods. The plan also allows a few ten-to-twelve story buildings on some carefully selected downtown waterfront parcels. <sup>Such</sup> ~~These~~ buildings cannot create significant environmental impacts and must generate significant public benefits such as affordable housing, jobs, and new open space facilities.

A key element of the Harborpark zoning plan is the establishment of a meaningful design review process of new developments. Under the Harborpark zoning plan all major new projects are also subject to design review by the community, the city, and the Boston Civic Design Commission. The design review process will ensure the implementation of key goals of the plan, such as creating new open space facilities, expanding the harbor's waterfront transportation system, and distributing the benefits of growth to all of the city's residents. The community-based planning process used to develop the Harborpark plan and related neighborhood plans has been a prototype of this process.

Maritime Economy Reserve Districts have been established for over 600 acres of waterfront land. Under this zoning designation, key waterfront parcels are reserved solely for maritime-industrial uses, particularly for shipping. The presence of good port facilities is very important for the New England economy





because the region's manufacturers need access to high-quality port facilities so they can compete in the international marketplace.

Related zoning plans have been created for many waterfront neighborhoods such as the North End and the Port Norfolk neighborhood in Dorchester. Similar plans are being developed for the Charlestown Navy Yard, East Boston, and the areas around Fort Point Channel and the South Boston piers. These plans set height and use limits which will preserve and expand existing residential areas, while creating new open space facilities and protecting the harbor's maritime economy. In some cases the plans will also allow the downtown service economy to grow in appropriately-scaled buildings on carefully-selected parcels.

The Harborpark planning process has also been developed in conjunction with state and city policies concerning Boston Harbor and the waterfront. The Massachusetts Water Resources Authority has undertaken an extensive program to clean up Boston Harbor by building new sewage treatment facilities, ending the practice of dumping sludge left over from sewage treatment into the harbor, and reducing the amount of toxic chemicals allowed in sewage discharges. This work is supported by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission's ongoing overhaul of the city's antiquated sewer lines.

The state's Office of Environmental Affairs is currently revising its M.G.L. Chapter 91 regulations which protect waterfront land from inappropriate uses. In addition, the state recently issued a master plan for the Boston Harbor Islands State Park which can become a major open space resource. State transportation agencies have also been working with the city to improve water transportation



15 facilities in the harbor. The Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport) and the city's Economic and Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) which together own a significant amount of waterfront land have also committed themselves to implementing key goals of the Harborpark plan.

Ultimately these efforts will combine to ensure that the harbor is restored as a key resource for the city's social and economic life. The results of this process should become a model for waterfront revitalization.

0 More importantly, the process should rekindle the spirit of community, excitement and vitality in the place where Boston began. Boston has always had one of the world's most attractive harbors. The Harborpark plan makes sure that the city's residents, workers, and visitors will be able to take full advantage of the great natural resources offered by the harbor and the surrounding waterfront.



## THE CONTEXT FOR PLANNING

Boston Harbor has generated great wealth for the city and has intensified the city's economic woes. Today the development pressures which could threaten the waterfront also create opportunities to reconnect the harbor and the city. If this is done correctly, the harbor can again make a major contribution to the economic and social life of the city.

The connections between the harbor and the city date back more than 300 years. From the founding of the city in the seventeenth century until the early twentieth century the harbor generated great economic prosperity for New England. For much of that time, the waterfront was also an important social center for the growing city.

In mid-twentieth century the harbor's demise fueled the economic problems the city faced from the Great Depression until the mid-1960s. During this time, waterfront neighborhoods were cut off from the harbor and became isolated from the city.

Since the mid-1960s the city has enjoyed an economic and social revival. Until very recently, except for a few selected redevelopment projects, primarily for luxury housing or offices, the redevelopment of the harbor has languished. As a result, the harbor, which is Boston's greatest natural resource, today is underutilized but threatened by unsuitable and inappropriate development.



The Harborpark Plan has been developed to ensure that new economic growth on the harbor benefits the city as a whole while restoring the lost physical connections between the city and the waterfront.

### The Rise of the Waterfront

Even before English settlers came to Boston in the seventeenth century the harbor was a source of sustenance for the area's residents. Indians thrived on fish from the harbor, building weirs in the estuaries and wetlands that existed where the Back Bay now stands. Remains of those weirs were first found during the construction of the Green Line's Boylston Street tunnel and the old New England Mutual Life Insurance Company building on Boylston Street. More recently, remains of the weirs were excavated and studied during the construction of the new New England Life building at 500 Boylston Street.

By the late 1600s the Boston's deep-water harbor attracted English settlers to the area. The settlers capitalized on the harbor's resources by constructing a series of facilities to serve the harbor trade. In the late 1600s, for example, Boston's first Town House was constructed at the site of Old City Hall, which was closer to the shoreline because massive landfilling had not yet occurred. The facility, which served as a market and seat of government, soon became "the exact pivot point of the primary orbit of Atlantic trade in New England," according to noted Boston historian Walter Muir Whitehill.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Bernard Bailyn, The New England Merchants in the Seventeenth Century, Cambridge, 1955 as cited by Walter Muir Whitehill, A Topographical History of Boston, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1968.





The settlers also upgraded waterfront facilities, building new piers, wharves, and storehouses. The most important of these projects was the construction of Long Wharf in 1710. The wharf ran down King Street (later renamed State Street) from the site of the Custom House Tower all the way to its present terminus in Boston Harbor. According to Whitehill:

"Long Wharf was early lined with continuous rows of shops and warehouses. It permitted the direct loading and unloading of the largest ships of the time without the use of boats or lighters. Moreover it amounted to a dramatic road from Boston to the sea. ... King Street ran straight and wide onto the Long Wharf, where lay the ships that were the source of the town's prosperity. This broad mile was the obvious avenue to Boston from the part of the world that really mattered."<sup>2</sup>

By the mid-1700s, fishing, whaling, and trade made Boston the premier port in North America. The importance of the maritime trade made Boston a hotbed of revolutionary activity in the years before the Revolutionary War because the British were imposing severe restrictions and harsh taxes on maritime trade in the colonies.

After the Revolution, the port continued to grow. In 1780, 455 ships from all over the globe docked in the city while 1200 vessels made the harbor their home. During 1791 more than 70 Boston ships left the city for Europe, the Indies, and China.

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<sup>2</sup>. Whitehill, pp. 20-21.



Public and private investment supported this economic activity. The federal government recognized the importance of Boston Harbor when it founded the Charlestown Navy Yard in 1800. In the early 1800s, new port facilities were created by South Cove landfilling that created what is now Harrison Avenue in Chinatown. These investments ensured that the city continued to thrive. In 1807, for example, shipping from Boston totalled 310,309 tons, more than one-third of the entire mercantile shipments in America.

As a result, the harbor was the major source of income for most of the city's residents. According to Louis Cellineri:

"In the first decade of the 1700s practically one of every three adult males in Boston enjoyed some degree of ownership in at least one ocean-going vessel ... At the end of the clipper ship era (1855) Boston was a metropolis of refinement and wealth, the richest city for its size in the world."<sup>3</sup>

The waterfront was also an important part of the city's social fabric. In the early 1800s, for example, a bridge was built connecting the city with South Boston in the hopes that it would spur the residential development of that new neighborhood. According to Whitehill, the bridge did little to spur development but became a popular promenade because it offered great views of the city and its harbor:

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<sup>3</sup>. Louis E. Cellineri, Seaport Dynamics, Lexington Books, Lexington, Massachusetts, 1976.



"On the bridge in 1821, Josiah Quincy Jr. had his first vision of the ravishing Emily Marshall, walking with a gentleman known as Beau Watson. Quincy tells us the walk was 'then known in popular parlance (out of compliment to the lovers who were to be met there) as the Bridge of Sighs.'"<sup>4</sup>

President Thomas Jefferson's embargo on European and the War of 1812 severely crippled the harbor's maritime trade. After the war, trade picked up as the clipper ship made Massachusetts famous throughout the world. According to historian Samuel Eliot Morison:

"Never in these United States has the brain of man conceived or the hand of man fashioned so perfect a thing as the clipper ship. In her, the long-suppressed artistic impulse of a practical, hard-worked race burst into flower. The 'Flying Cloud' was our Rheims, the 'Sovereign of the Seas' our Parthenon, the 'Lightning' our Amiens."<sup>5</sup>

#### The Harbor and the Industrial Revolution

This foreign trade was the source of raw materials for New England's fledgling industries and opened up markets for the products of that industry. To serve that growing trade, in the 1830s South Cove was filled to create the land that now houses Chinatown, Bay Village, the Leather District, and South Station. This effort created an area where ships could dock, goods could be stored in

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<sup>4</sup>. Whitehill, pp. 76.

<sup>5</sup>. Samuel Eliot Morison, Maritime History of Massachusetts Boston, Massachusetts, 1921, as cited in The WPA Guide to Massachusetts, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, Massachusetts, 1937 (reissued in 1983).



warehouses, businessmen could stay in opulent hotels, and railroads could transport materials and goods to and from inland communities.

The riches gained in trade by Boston seafarers were used to spur the Industrial Revolution in New England. Raw materials such as cotton and wool for textiles and leather for shoes were brought to the port and were transported to the factories that dotted Boston and the New England landscape. The finished products were returned to the ports where they were shipped throughout the world. These goods as well as sugar, cane, cocoa bean, coffee, and tea filled the warehouses from East Boston to Fort Point Channel. Changing technology also changed the shipping business as clipper ships were replaced by ocean-going steamers.

To keep up with this growing market, in the late nineteenth century, the Boston Wharf Company built new waterfront facilities near Fort Point Channel. These facilities were constructed on land which was filled with a variety of materials including debris from the Great Fire of 1872 which destroyed most of downtown Boston.

Despite this growth Boston was no longer the leading port in America. But it was still the most important port in New England. In 1901, for example, ships sailing out of Boston Harbor carried goods valued at \$143 million, while imports amounted to \$80 million. The port not only served New England's manufacturing economy, it also supported a growing manufacturing economy in the city. By 1930, Boston had more than 100,000 manufacturing jobs. Almost half of those jobs were harbor-related.





Fishing also continued to be a major activity in the port. In 1914 the major fishing boats moved to the new Fish Pier in South Boston which was designed to be the longest pier in the world solely devoted to the fishing business. Smaller fisherman stayed downtown working out of a number of piers, including T Wharf on Atlantic Avenue where they were active for many decades. The 1937 WPA Guide to Massachusetts, for example, noted that:

"This [T Wharf] is the center of 'The Little man's fishing industry,' for the larger boats go to the great modern Fish Pier in South Boston. Knots of Latin fishermen are always gathered here mending nets, repairing buoys, or baiting lines, and animatedly discussing the weather, the catch, and current prices."<sup>6</sup>

During this era passenger ferries were also a common sight in the harbor. In the late nineteenth century, these ferries carried more than 10,000 people a day meeting the city's recreational, commuting, and commercial needs. The boats sailed from downtown Boston to a variety of destinations including East Boston, Hull, Nantasket, Hingham, North Weymouth, Nahant, Plymouth, Gloucester, Provincetown, and the Harbor Islands.

Throughout these years, the waterfront was also a social center for the city. One observer recalled that:

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<sup>6</sup>. WPA Guide to Massachusetts, pp. 160.



"Our wharves ... were in every truth water parks for the people and contained no end of object lessons. On pleasant Sundays, whole families resorted thither. On holidays and special gala occasions, they were immensely attractive; each vied with the other. Every description of craft, from sloop to a full rigged ship, was rich in the display of canvas and bunting. It was a picture that ... can be more easily imagined than described."<sup>7</sup>

The mercantile riches and the industrial revolution which they helped create became the basis for Boston's emergence in the nineteenth century as one the nation's leading centers of finance. The fortunes created by this trade also financed a host of medical, cultural, and educational facilities in the region such as Symphony Hall and the Museum of Fine Arts. The growing economy also fueled a booming entertainment industry, building Fenway Park in 1912, Boston Garden in 1928, and a host of theaters, vaudeville houses, and movie theaters.

However many of the creators of the vast fortunes decided that fortunes gained at risk should not be risked again. Instead of continuing to reinvest in the port and in new manufacturing facilities, they turned to more "prudent" investments. By restricting new investment, they unintentionally accelerated the city's and the harbors' decline in the mid-twentieth century.

#### **The Decline of the City and the Harbor**

The history of the harbor's decline goes back to the early 1800s and the construction of Chesapeake, Ohio, and Erie Canals. These canals made other port

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<sup>7</sup>. Colonel Frank Forbes, "The Old Wharves of Boston," Proceedings of the Bostonian Society, January 1952.



cities more competitive by giving them better access to the new markets in the expanding American frontier. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Boston's position was further weakened by railroad pricing schemes which made shipment from Boston more expensive than shipment from other East Coast ports.

In the early twentieth century, the harbor's decline accelerated as textile and shoe manufacturers reduced their labor costs by moving to the South and West. With the advent of the Great Depression manufacturing jobs became scarcer. Boston lost 50,000 manufacturing jobs after 1930. More than half of those jobs were in the harbor areas.

The collapse of the manufacturing and maritime economies was compounded by the lack of public and private investment in the city during and after the Great Depression. During these years, the government made no capital improvements in the harbor's piers and transportation systems. Throughout the city public investment continued to drop, until the city's long-term debt was only \$59 million in 1956. Another blow to the harbor came in 1974 when the federal government closed its Charlestown and South Boston shipyards.

Private investment in the city also ground to a standstill. After the construction of the United Shoe Machinery Building in 1928, only three major new buildings were built in the city until the mid-1960s. These were the New England Life building (1942) second John Hancock building (1947) and the Prudential complex (1959-1965). Similarly, four hotels -- the Parker House, the Ritz-Carlton, the Bradford, and the Boston Park Plaza -- were all built in 1927. No other



major hotel was constructed until the early 1960s when the Hotel Sheraton-Boston opened as part of the Prudential complex.

The lack of public and private investment as well as the loss of population and jobs in the city combined to drag down property values. This reduced the city's ability to invest in infrastructure and made Boston even less attractive to new investment. Like the rest of the city, the port continued to decline. Economic historian Russell Adams recalls that during this era:

"The sagging, rotting, disused, misused wharves were not the only battered remnants of days long past. There were also ships, or what was left of them after the ravages of time and scavengers. Like dead and floundered sea creatures nipped by marauding sharks, a fleet of derelict hulls littered the harbor, bleached by the sun at low tide. Even at that, their day was not yet done; in the grim and needy winters of the early 1930s, some 120 of these skeletal vessels were dragged ashore, broken to bits, and picked over for firewood."<sup>8</sup>

A series of other actions further disconnected the city and the harbor. The harbor ferries were discontinued in 1953 when the Mystic River Bridge (later renamed the Tobin Bridge) opened. In the late 1950s, the new elevated Central Artery further cut off the harbor from the city.

The Revitalization of Boston

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<sup>8</sup> Russell B. Adams, The Boston Money Tree, Thomas Crowell Co., New York, New York, 1977.





Since the mid-1960s Boston has been experiencing a steady economic transformation. The city's reshaped economic structure now favors a broad range of financial and service-based activities. These activities include higher education, medicine, professional services, and financial management.

Boston has led the nation in these areas. As a result, since 1976 more than 60,000 new jobs have been created in the city. In the same time frame, private investment in development has exceeded \$5 billion and the city's taxable property value has more than doubled to more than \$14 billion.

This new prosperity stabilized the city after decades of disinvestment and suburbanization. The new investment has also brought new development pressures and opportunities to the long-neglected harbor. But until the mid-1980s the harbor played a small role in the city's revival. For example, of the 560,000 jobs in the city, only about 11 percent (60,000 jobs) are harbor related.

Nonetheless, the harbor is not without resources and investment. The harbor's perimeter includes approximately \$3 billion of the city's \$14 billion in property values. Twenty percent of the post-1975 development investment in the city has been in waterfront properties. And roughly 2,000 of the 10,000 new housing units built in the city since 1970 have been constructed near the harbor. Most of those units were built in the North End, on the Waterfront, and in Charlestown.

The city and the state have also moved to redevelop waterfront land. The renovation of Quincy Market and the construction of Christopher Columbus park helped a generation of Bostonians rediscover the waterfront. Projects such as the



Boston Marine Industrial Park in South Boston and the construction and renovation of shipping terminals in South Boston and East Boston helped shore up the maritime economy.

A careful look at the harbor area, however, reveals a serious misuse of natural resources. One-third of the 2,000 acres on the waterfront (excluding Logan Airport) is vacant. Most of this land, which is located in Charlestown, South Boston and East Boston, once held warehouses, piers, and houses. In 1984 only 18 percent of the waterfront land was accessible to the public. The public areas in some newer developments were badly marked and were uninviting. In addition, the owners of a significant number of parcels in neighborhoods bordering the harbor did not pay their property taxes.

The harbor itself is badly polluted because of an outdated and undersized sewage treatment system that serves the entire metropolitan region. In 1984, after years of wrangling and lawsuits, the state created the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) to undertake a multi-billion dollar, multi-year clean-up of the harbor. The MWRA is currently finalizing plans for new sewage treatment plants on the harbor and new land-based sludge-treatment facilities.

### The Natural Environment

As development has occurred in the city, Bostonians have become more aware of the impacts of development on the ecosystems of the city. These systems, which include plant and animal life, air and light, surface and ground water, geologic features, and people, must be very important considerations in the design of new waterfront developments. This is critically important because changes in the



ecosystems can cause a variety of conditions which affect human health, safety, and psychological well-being.

High velocity, localized winds that are generated by densely configured structures, for example, can be uncomfortable and dangerous for pedestrians. Tall structures can generate those winds when they force the high velocity winds, which naturally occur at higher elevations, to sweep down to the ground level. At ground level the winds can accelerate to gale force when they whip around the corners of monolithic structures or when they are channelled into narrow corridors between the walls of buildings. This problem is especially important in Boston which has the highest ambient wind levels of any city in the country.

Similarly, insensitive building height, massing, and density can block sunlight at the pedestrian level. This can create dark oppressive environments and can minimize the beneficial effects of the sun in the colder months of the year.

The harbor's water has also been polluted by a variety of sources including an outdated sewage treatment system, industrial discharges of toxic chemicals, and storm drainage from road surfaces.

Air pollution, which is primarily caused by automobile emissions, is a less serious problem in the city because Boston's winds usually disperse that pollution. However, local air pollution can worsen if emissions are trapped between dense rows of buildings on narrow streets.



The Harborpark plan has been designed to recognize the importance of these issues. Low-rise buildings proposed for the harbor's edge will not create significant new shadows or winds. Special design reviews are required to ensure that larger buildings do not create unacceptable shadows or winds. Tree plantings may also be required to mitigate wind impacts.

The use of water transportation facilities and mass transit are encouraged as a way to reduce air pollution. Strict design standards will also prevent more pollution of the harbor.

#### The Future of Boston and the Harbor

In the coming years balanced growth on the waterfront can strengthen the city's economy without harming the environment. This growth can also be managed in a way that benefits the residents of the neighborhoods which surround the harbor.

The waterfront has the potential to accommodate growth in Boston's economy which is expected to expand at a steady pace until at least the next century, according to a number of demographic projection. For example, by the end of the 1990s, Boston could gain more than xxx new jobs. More than xxxxx of these jobs will probably be located in central Boston, an area which includes downtown, Charlestown, the East Boston piers, the North End, the waterfront, South Boston, Beacon Hill, and the Back Bay. Orderly growth along the waterfront offers the opportunity to help the residents of these neighborhoods recapture losses suffered from the diminished role of Boston Harbor as a major seaport and manufacturing area.





Similarly, the harbor area could be the site of one-third of the \$xxx in private development investment expected to occur in the city by the year 2000. This waterfront investment would generate approximately \$xxx million in new tax revenue for the city.

New housing can also be built in the harbor area. By the year 2000, almost xxx dwelling units housing xxx people can be built on the harbor. Waterfront development can also generate significant new funds for housing linkage programs.

The planned depression of the Central Artery also offers an opportunity to reconnect the downtown with the waterfront. The planned new Seaport Access Road in South Boston can also open up the South Boston waterfront without creating serious traffic problems for nearby residential neighborhoods.

The challenge facing the city is to channel this growth in a way that balances the maritime economy, new economic development, jobs, and public access to the waterfront. The Harborpark District Plan is a major step forward in this process.



## WATER TRANSPORTATION

Since the earliest days of Boston's settlement, water transportation has played an important role in the transportation network of the city and the character of the harbor. Colonial settlers quickly realized that the peninsular geography of the city readily lent itself to the establishment of a network of water transit routes linking the various seaside communities in the area such as Charlestown, Noodle's Island [East Boston], and Winnissimet [Chelsea] to the Harbor Islands and the mainland. The first of these water routes, "The Great Ferry", began operation in 1631 between Charlestown and what is now the North End of the City of Boston. In addition, the Great Court of Massachusetts established ferry service connecting Boston, East Boston and Chelsea in 1638. In 1640, the famous "Penny Ferry" began operation across the Mystic River at the site of the present Malden Bridge.

Despite the invention of the steam engine and electric trolley, this system of water transit continued to flourish and grow into the 1800s. These services peaked in the 1880s, when ferries carried over 10,000 passengers per day, and met the recreational, commuting, and commercial needs of the area with routes from Downtown Boston to East Boston, Hull, Nantasket, Hingham, Nahant, Plymouth, Gloucester, Provincetown, and the Harbor Islands. Many still remember the days when huge, brightly colored ferries chugged across the harbor, providing both function and attraction to the people of the area.

This network of ferries declined as Boston entered the twentieth century. As the popularity and affordability of the automobile rose, the demand for



waterborne transportation quickly diminished. January 1, 1953 spelled the death knoll for water transit in Boston, when Mayor John B. Hynes, in anticipation of the opening of the Tobin Bridge, signed legislation legally discontinuing passenger ferry service in Boston. The construction of the Sumner and Callahan tunnels connecting downtown Boston to East Boston further reduced the need for any type of water transit service on the harbor.

Today, as the Harbor is once again becoming the focus for commerce, recreation and housing, water transportation is re-emerging as an integral component of the overall transportation network in Boston. A resurgent economy is producing new jobs and housing in the region, especially in downtown Boston, where over 283,000 people presently work. New employment and housing opportunities are creating significant population increases in the harbor neighborhoods. By 1991, over 5,000 new housing units and 10,000 new residents are expected in the waterfront neighborhoods of East Boston, Charlestown, North End/Downtown, South Boston, and Dorchester. This represents a 19% increase over today's population of 193,370 people living within the Harborpark boundaries.

This population increase is placing tremendous demands on the existing transportation network, including the city's roadways, bridges, tunnels, and parking facilities. These factors, combined with the Central Artery North Area Construction project (CANA) at City Square in Charlestown, the Third Harbor Tunnel and Central Artery project, will exacerbate traffic congestion unless the existing transportation network is expanded to include viable alternatives.



Water transportation offers a means of relieving demand on heavily used roads and is a valuable extension to Boston's transportation network. For these reasons, it is important that water transportation be a priority consideration in Boston Harbor's planning and development agenda.

Water transportation began its modern day renaissance in 1984, when South Shore residents, cognizant of the transportation impacts of the reconstruction of the Southeast Expressway, petitioned the state to subsidize and expand water transit service from Hingham to Downtown Boston. Because of its success, the Hingham Dock to Rowes Wharf commuter services serves as the model for the expansion of the existing water transportation system in Boston Harbor.

Hingham Dock to Rowes Wharf - Two private operators are engaged under contract to the MBTA to provide a dedicated service on this route which operates Monday through Friday with a total of 22 round trips per day.

One coordinated schedule is followed by both operations. Boston Harbor Commuter Service operates 15 of the round trips with five vessels; four are 150 passenger and one is 300 passenger. Mass Bay Lines has a single 150 passenger boat, operating 7 of the round trips. The trip takes between 30 and 33 minutes. Hingham to Boston service begins at 6:00 a.m. and concludes at 7:15 p.m., while Boston to Hingham service begins at 6:45 a.m. and concludes with a final departure at 8:00 p.m. The surface parking lot at Hingham has 100+ free spaces. While the one-way fare is \$3.00 for adults, a book of ten tickets reduces the fare to \$2.75.





As the schedule has expanded and additional boats have been added, ridership has increased markedly. For example, the monthly rider total for May of 1984 was 11,601, while May of 1987 reported a total of 32,013. Similarly, January of 1986 reported 13,642, while by January of 1987 the monthly total had increased to 28,283. Presently, ridership has leveled off to approximately 1,900 daily passengers, increasing to 2,300 daily passengers during summer months, reflecting the addition of riders with South Shore summer homes. Approximately 70,000 persons make the trip each month in July and August.

With this success as a base, planners and transportation officials saw the potential for a modern rebirth of water transportation in Boston Harbor. With the goal of such a comprehensive system in mind, the Harborpark program requires that, where appropriate, developers include and maintain water transportation facilities as components of their projects. This effort is being carried out to ensure that sufficient and high quality infrastructure will be in place to support this emerging water transit network. This initiative is being readily accepted by waterfront developers who see its potential and are building functional and attractive facilities as parts of their projects, and by private boat owners and operators, who are purchasing new boats and equipment to meet the oncoming demand.

Since the start of the Harborpark program in 1984, over \$100 million worth of investment has been committed to water transit facilities, creating more than two miles of linear dock space with supporting facilities at numerous sites across the harbor. Public agencies, private developers, boat operators and citizens are collaborating to ensure that these facilities are sited correctly, designed



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appropriately, and built to be safe and functional. New services are being established, passenger growth is continuing to climb, and policies are being created to make water transportation a safe and attractive transportation alternative. Specific efforts in these areas include:

The Logan Airport Water Shuttle: First established by Massport in 1985, this service is now subsidized and operated by the Beacon Companies and runs between Logan Airport and Rowes Wharf on the downtown waterfront. The services operates over 50 round trips per day on fifteen minute headways, and currently carries over 3,500 passengers per week to the airport. The pleasurable 7 minute ride across the harbor is supported by free connecting bus service for passengers from the airport dock to their airline concourses.

Charlestown Navy Yard - Pier 4 to Long Wharf - First established by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in April 1987, this cross harbor shuttle has operates between the Charlestown Navy Yard and Long Wharf adjacent to Waterfront Park and Quincy Market in the downtown. Before its expansion in October 1988, the service ran seven complete round trips each day, four during the peak morning and 3 in the afternoon-evening peak.

Since October 1988, Boston Harbor Cruises, under contract to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, with funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Works in conjunction with the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction has operated the shuttle service between the Charlestown Navy Yard and Long Wharf. The service now operates 25 round trips each weekday, and 17 round trips on weekends and



holidays. The first departure from Long Wharf on weekdays is 6:30 a.m., while the last trip of the day from Charlestown to Long Wharf departs at 6:45 p.m. On weekends and holidays, the first departure from Long Wharf is at 10:00 a.m., while the last trip of the day from Charlestown to Long Wharf departs at 4:15 p.m. Service is scheduled every 30 minutes, and crossing time is ten minutes. At all times the fare is \$1.00 each way.

Boston Harbor Cruises' two new 42 ft. vessels, Bunker Hill and Breed's Hill, capable of accommodating 38 passengers per trip, currently transport over 1,500 passengers weekly between the Charlestown Navy Yard and Long Wharf. A free van shuttle, operated by Andre Coach Lines, meets every water shuttle and provides service throughout the Charlestown Navy Yard.

Harbor Islands State Park/Excursion Service: Numerous boat operators offer harbor tour and excursion services to the Boston Harbor Islands and to other attractions across the Boston waterfront. These services provide a unique opportunity for residents and visitors alike to enjoy the natural beauty and recreational assets of the harbor. Ridership on such cruises and tours has increased over 300 percent in the last two years, to a point where in excess of 500,000 people enjoy these boating activities on an annual basis.

Childs Engineering Dockage Study: In June of 1987, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, City of Boston Transportation Department, and City of Boston Environmental Department commissioned the Childs Engineering Company to develop prototype docking standards for Boston Harbor. This unique study researched and catalogued the types, sizes, and



nature of passenger vessels operating in Boston Harbor and recommended design and construction standards for docking, loading, passenger, and servicing facilities to be constructed across the harbor to support the emerging water transportation system. The Childs Engineering Dockage

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Study design goals include:

- High performance capability
- Functional ease
- Long-term durability
- Low Maintenance and operations needs
- Attractive and appropriate design
- Barrier-free accessibility

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This study was completed in December, 1988. The study has been distributed to waterfront developers and boat operators across the harbor to assist them in designing and constructing their facilities and to ensure a high level of quality, consistency, and function for all water transit docks along the waterfront.

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As Boston continues to rediscover water transportation as an attractive, and efficient means of transportation, more routes will be activated, and through the various efforts under the Harborpark Plan, the infrastructure and planning for the systems continued success and growth will already be in place. Hence, as it did one hundred years ago, the City of Boston will be able to turn to its harbor as a significant resource in assisting with the public transportation needs of the city and the region.





## COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

The most ubiquitous and perhaps the most personal component of Boston's Harborpark Plan is the extensive community participation built into its planning process. The ultimate success and acceptance of the city's Harborpark program will depend on the effective integration and use of citizen input into the decisions made concerning waterfront development. This participation has been guaranteed through the establishment of several neighborhood councils and citizen advisory committees - originally appointed by Mayor Flynn and eventually selected through election by their peers - to review projects and policies and make formal recommendations on a broad range of issues facing the harbor.

The primary community group fulfilling this role is the Harborpark Advisory Committee (HPAC). Appointed by the Mayor in October, 1984 at the inception of the Harborpark Plan, the HPAC is charged with advising the Mayor and the Boston Redevelopment Authority on a myriad of waterfront issues. This group of 15 volunteers is composed of five representatives of state and city government involved in waterfront planning and development (including the City of Boston Environment Department, the State Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, the City of Boston Transportation Department, the City of Boston Public Facilities Department, and the Governor's Office of Economic Development); representatives of five private business and labor concerns located on the harbor (including: boat operators, harbor labor union agents, the Boston Shipping Association, the Boston Harbor Associates, and the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce); and one community representative from each of the five waterfront neighborhoods (East Boston, Charlestown, North End/Downtown, South Boston, and Dorchester).



For the past year a "working group" of the Harborpark Advisory Committee has been reviewing data and information provided by BRA staff in order to develop initial land use recommendations for the Harborpark Interim Planning Overlay District which will ultimately result in recommendations for new zoning along the entire Boston Waterfront. This group has held meetings bi-weekly for over a year, dedicating over 650 hours of volunteer time to this one effort.

Over the past four years, the Harborpark Advisory Committee has dealt with a wide range of issues affecting Boston's waterfront. A major issue for the Committee has been ensuring public access to the water's edge through both planning efforts and the development review process. The Committee has also been an active supporter of preserving the maritime industrial economy in Boston Harbor by supporting the enactment of the Maritime Economy Reserve Zone which was established under Boston's Zoning Code in 1987 to ensure permanent protection of the maritime industries.

In addition, the Committee has reviewed development projects, encouraged the initiation of long-term planning efforts for Boston's Inner Harbor and provided guidance in the coordination of city, state, and federal efforts affecting the future of Boston's waterfront. This city-wide group is complimented by neighborhood councils and other similar organizations and groups who operate in and represent the five individual harbor neighborhoods.

These dedicated citizens graciously donate their time, energy, and abilities to formally and informally advise the Mayor and the City on harbor issues, letting



the voice of the neighborhoods be heard and improving the quality of life in their communities. These groups meet on their own on a regular basis ( 2-4 times per month), co-host public meetings, public hearings, and planning workshops with the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and ensure that waterfront issues and projects are fairly and adequately reviewed and that the opinions and recommendations of their communities are part of the decision making process.

For example, the Charlestown Neighborhood Council, a 21-member locally elected civic organization, has dealt with many issues related to waterfront development in its community. The Council has reviewed and commented on many major development issues such as the proposed Master Plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard, and the proposed land uses under the Harborpark Interim Planning Overlay District (IPOD). It also proposed a comprehensive review of zoning and the creation of an IPOD for the community, advocated for improved public transportation services, and called for public access to the water's edge in new development projects.

The Charlestown Neighborhood Council is currently reviewing a proposal by the New England Aquarium to relocate from its current location on Central Wharf to the Navy Yard at Drydock #2. This project, if approved, would take five years to complete. The Aquarium could bring significant benefits to the Charlestown community.

Another excellent example of the community process is the Clippership Wharf project in East Boston. As a result of the participation of the East Boston Planning and Zoning Advisory Committee (PZAC) the project was significantly



modified from its original program. After community review by the East Boston PZAC the project was altered to include fifty-five affordable housing units and a community center. Further, a redesign of the buildings and streets was implemented and an effort to reopen a closed MBTA subway entrance was initiated. It is this kind of community involvement that can make development projects adapt to the existing fabric of a community and maximize the benefits to the neighborhood.

It is evident that these community organizations are an effective means to guarantee that the needs of the community are being met and assure that development policies put forth by the City are appropriate and beneficial to the neighborhoods. These groups are assisted and supported in their efforts by the provision of technical and constituent services by the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services. These individuals and groups have devoted tens of thousands of hours of effort in deliberating, reviewing, and making recommendations on policies and projects involving waterfront development.

### Harborpark Day

For the last four years, the City of Boston and the Boston Redevelopment Authority have hosted a one-day waterfront festival known as Harborpark Day. This extremely successful annual celebration of the revitalization of Boston Harbor has allowed thousands of Boston's residents and visitors of all ages to learn about, participate in, and enjoy the many activities, attractions, and developments on Boston's waterfront. The event is held in the early fall and





involves a variety of activities held at different locations across the waterfront including the Charlestown Navy Yard, Waterfront Park, and Rowes Wharf. The purpose of the event is to restore pride in Boston's revitalized waterfront and to familiarize residents with the amenities and redevelopment efforts which have been underway since the Harborpark Plan was instituted in October 1984.

Specific events include: open houses and tours of development projects, complimentary water shuttle service, live entertainment, sailing events, tours of visiting U.S. Navy vessels, food and novelty vendors, children's games, and distribution of souvenirs and information to raise awareness about harbor issues and development projects.

In 1987 "Chowdafest", sponsored by Horizon's For Youth, a non-profit organization serving underprivileged youth, joined in the annual celebration. In addition, the National Park Services, sponsored several events at the Boston National Historic Park. The BRA looks forward to continued success and co-sponsorship of this annual event.

### Special Events

Other annual activities encouraging the use, enjoyment and awareness of Boston's waterfront include the annual Navy Yard Lighting Ceremonies which culminates with the lighting of a 50' tree at the head of Drydock #2. During the summer, events occur along many piers at the Charlestown Navy Yard featuring the annual "Tugboat Muster" and the "Antique and Classic Boat Show" on Pier 4. On the Fourth of July, Harborfest produces several days of continuous entertainment.



In 1988 a 12 meter yacht race between two former America's Cup contenders: "Courageous" and "Stars and Stripes" was held.

Each year, as awareness of the accessibility of the parks and recreation opportunities created under the Harborpark Program grows, new events are expected to occur.

A full array and exhibit of project models, maps, plans, drawings, and charts are always available for public review and information at the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Office of Harbor Planning and Development, located on the second floor of Building #34 at One First Avenue in the Charlestown Navy Yard. The building is accessible to persons with mobility limitations, and is open for visitors, Monday through Friday, during the normal office hours of 9 AM to 5 PM. In addition, a full compliment of publications and information outlining and detailing the planning initiatives and current development activities on the harbor are always available to the public by mail, or from the Harbor Planning and Development Office. Staff members are also available to assist people and to answer any questions regarding waterfront planning or development activities. Through this forum of intensive community participation, council members and individual citizens have developed the experience and sophistication to make wise recommendations and valuable decisions on waterfront planning and development issues. This grass-roots community involvement process has created a greater awareness of the important issues facing the city and has engendered a solid working relationship between the citizens of Boston, private developers on the waterfront, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and other public agencies involved in planning and development on the harbor.



# RECONNECTING THE WATERFRONT TO THE CITY

## Historical Background

1 One of the most important goals of the Harborpark Plan is to reconnect the waterfront, both physically and functionally, to the rest of the city. When Boston was originally settled and began to evolve as a city, the waterfront was the center of economic and social activity, with the rest of the city expanding out and growing from it. Men worked on the ships, docks, and counting houses located on the waterfront, children played on the piers and boats, and families lived close to the harbor. As the city's economy changed and shipping and manufacturing declined, the city turned inward upon itself, taking the jobs and vibrant activity with it, and leaving the waterfront to deteriorate, disconnected from the mainstream of the city.

10 In the early seventies, a few small development projects were completed on the waterfront. With the notable exception of the New England Aquarium on Central Wharf, these were predominantly small enclaves of luxury housing and expensive office space. The projects were not designed or built with the goal of public use or enjoyment, but rather for use by individuals capable of affording such a lifestyle. Had this trend been allowed to continue, the waterfront would have become solely an exclusive, privatized community shutting out the majority of Boston's citizens, and disconnecting the harbor from the rest of the city.



## Harborpark Program

With the establishment of Harborpark program, the Flynn Administration sent a clear message that this was not the direction the waterfront would take. It was going to again become a major part of city life, reconnected to the neighborhoods around it, and accessible to all of Boston's residents and visitors. Although physical access is the most visible component of this program, access to the waterfront will also include economic access to the jobs, housing, and public benefits created on the waterfront, and social access to the open spaces, recreational uses, and commercial activities on the waterfront. The goal is to once again return the waterfront to its former position as a center of commerce, recreation, and life in the city of Boston.

### Harborwalk: Public Access to Boston's Harbor and Waterfront

The centerpiece of the Harborpark program's goal of public access is "Harborwalk" - the ambitious waterfront walkway system, designed to create continuous, public access to and along the entire harbor. Harborwalk will serve not just to open up the waterfront, but also to unite it, by bringing together people from all of Boston's neighborhoods to use the open space and facilities, to observe the activities of the working waterfront, and to enjoy the sheer beauty of Boston's greatest natural resource, its harbor. It is the creation, maintenance, and preservation of this public access resource that will be the most unique and enduring legacy of the Harborpark program. With the completion of Harborwalk, the waterfront will become a valuable addition to the city's network





of open spaces, forming an extension and addition to Frederick Law Olmsted's "Emerald Necklace".

## Goals of Harborwalk

Harborwalk aims to provide memorable and tangible experiences of the waterfront and the Harbor. The diversity of uses and activities offered will create opportunities for increased visual, physical, cultural, and recreational access, making the Harborwalk experience unique for Boston residents and visitors. The planning and design goals which guide the Harborwalk project are as follows:

To accommodate a wide variety and diversity of users

To maximize physical access

To maximize visual access

To design Harborwalk as a major year-round pedestrian connector

To design a safe and comfortable waterfront walkway

To increase historical/cultural/educational/recreational activities

To maintain a Boston city character

## Harborwalk Benefits

Through Harborwalk efforts, the formerly deteriorating and inaccessible waterfront will be returned to the people of Boston for their use and enjoyment.

Public benefits will include the following:



**Continuous Water's Edge Walkway** - The walkway will provide direct access to recreational, cultural, and historic attraction located on and around Boston Harbor.

**Increased Open Space** - A great variety of open spaces with shade trees, ornamental shrubs, and flowering plants will be provided, adding serenity and beauty to the Harborwalk experience.

**New Recreational Opportunities** - Children's play facilities, benches, and other recreational facilities and furnishings will provide new opportunities for play and relaxation.

**Enhanced Views of the Harbor and Waterfront** - Opportunities will be created for beautiful water vistas from neighborhoods to the Harbor, new visual connections across wharves and piers, and views from one waterfront neighborhood to another.

**Continuous Bikeways** - A continuous bikeway, either shared with vehicular or pedestrian traffic or a separate right-of-way, will offer bicyclists a safe way to commute or otherwise enjoy cycling activity.

**Direct Connections to Mass Transit** - Direct connections will be made to subway and bus stops as well as existing and proposed water transportation terminals facilitating access to the water's edge and the public amenities on it.



Links to the Waterfront Neighborhoods - Direct linkage will be made to the inner East Boston, Charlestown, North End/Downtown, South Boston and Dorchester neighborhoods, making the water's edge easily accessible from the inland areas.

Links with the Emerald Necklace - Links to Olmsted's Emerald Necklace will be made at four points: at Charles River Esplanade (through the North Station area); at Memorial Drive Promenade (through Paul Revere Landing); at Boston Common (via the Walk-to-the-Sea and via Summer Street/Winter Street); and at Castle Island in South Boston.

Links to Harbor Islands - Water transportation will provide easy and enjoyable access to the Harbor Islands, linking Harborwalk with the diverse recreational opportunities on these invaluable Harbor resources.

Links to Riverwalks - Harborwalk will link to future riverwalks extending along the Boston side of the Neponset, Charles, Mystic Rivers and Chelsea Creek, providing continuity to Boston's water's edge public walkway system.

Revitalization - An improved walkway and its connections will make the area more attractive for private investment, thereby improving the quality of life for Boston residents.



## Harborwalk Components

Harborwalk is being implemented by encouraging waterfront land owners and developers to provide a public walkway and amenities along the seaward edges of piers and wharfs. Harborwalk, made of quality, compatible materials (brick, granite, boardwalk) will be handicapped accessible, and contain amenities such as seating, lighting, landscaping, and works of public art. Some areas will also include fishing piers, observation decks, water transit terminals, public boat docks or launches. On beaches or other undeveloped areas of the waterfront, the walkway may consist of paths and grassy areas, allowing for uninterrupted enjoyment of nature and the activities of the harbor. At maritime industrial areas such as port terminals, fishing and lobstering piers, and the U.S. Coast Guard base where direct walkway access may be difficult or unsafe, observation towers/decks and/or guided tours are contemplated to allow people to watch and understand these interesting waterfront activities. A bikeway which is continuous throughout the Harborwalk area is also planned, providing the public with an alternate safe and pleasant mode of transportation.

Reconnecting the waterfront to the city is also being achieved through the provision of public open spaces within the Harborwalk system. These open spaces will provide a variety of recreational opportunities which will draw people to the Harbor, bring activity to the waterfront and allow for greater use and enjoyment of its resources. Included in Harborwalk will be the following types of public open spaces:





**Water-Dependent Parks** - These parks will offer a rich variety of images and activities that are water-dependent, thereby contributing a unique character to the waterfront. Uses may include: fishing piers, sailing clubs, marinas, floating restaurants, and live-aboard vessels. In 1987 it was estimated that there were 14 yacht clubs, 9 marinas and 5 sailing clubs active in and around Boston Harbor. Combined, these establishments provided approximately 1,582 boat slips and 1,495 moorings. Within the next half decade it is anticipated that there could be a 20% increase in the number of ships and moorings.

**Nature Parks** - These quiet, secluded, heavily landscaped open spaces will serve as a sanctuary from the density and intensity of the urban environment. In these natural surroundings, urban dwellers will be able to feel the sea breeze, breath clean air, feel the warmth of the sun, watch seagulls, and rest their minds from the hustle and bustle of city life.

**Active Recreation Parks** - These parks, functioning primarily for exercise and sport, will offer active recreation areas such as playing fields, ball courts, tot lots, swimming pools and skating rinks.

**Urban Open Space** - These will include active plazas, courts, and streets with cafes and bistros which are framed by the working and living environment and connected to one another by Harborwalk.

**Boulevards** - Waterfront boulevards will link the inner neighborhood districts with the waterfront, offering a variety of pedestrian features and



activities such as landscaping, wide sidewalks, seating areas, signs, kiosks, umbrellas, and arcades.

Bridges - A number of bridges in the Harborwalk system will provide pedestrians a physical connection across water. In order to provide a pleasant and safe crossing, these bridges may include: plexiglass panels for winter protection, grand staircases leading to bridge walkways, evocative period lighting built into railings, and pedestrian protection from vehicles.

Large Scale Mixed-Use Historic Precincts - These areas will preserve or create a special architectural character in an area large enough to be considered a Harborfront neighborhood within the city, complete with convenience retail shopping areas, parks, and public services.

Working Waterfront - These areas will be preserved and protected as maritime industrial and commercial sites along the waterfront. Public access to these areas will be achieved through overhead bridges, observation decks, educational exhibits, and tours of facilities.

## Current Efforts

23 Current Harborwalk planning efforts are focused on the 18.6 mile walkway segment in the Inner Harbor, extending from Charlestown to South Boston, along the Little Mystic Channel, Charlestown Navy Yard, the North End/Downtown Waterfront, Fort Point Channel and the Fan Piers. Since the start of the Harborpark project, 10.7 miles (58%) of this area has been completed, 3.3 miles



(18%) is under construction or planned, and the remaining 4.6 miles (24%) is currently being reviewed and planned.

## Recent Progress

24 The most recent progress in the implementation of Harborwalk includes completion of the Rowes Wharf and Shipyard Park Harborwalk segments, and portions of Long Wharf. Rowes Wharf, on the downtown waterfront, provides 1,670 linear feet of Harborwalk, a commuter boat terminal with a domed waiting area/observation deck, and public open space on 65% of the site. Also available for public use are a copper domed observatory offering panoramic views of the Harbor and downtown Boston, pleasure boat slips and a public dinghy dock.

Shipyard Park, located in the Charlestown Navy Yard, is a 16-acre public open space with a children's playground and tot lot, fountains, and rich landscaping. Adjacent to Shipyard Park is a public boardwalk with benches and lighting extending around the perimeter of Dry Dock #2 and linking to the public open space at Pier 4.

25 Phase I of the Long Wharf project, to be completed in the Spring of 1989, includes creation of a large granite and brick plaza/open space at the pier's end with benches, lighting, planters, a shade structure, and public art. Phase II and III of the project include reconstruction of the seawalls and docks, allowing the wharf to serve as the principle docking/embarkation headquarters for boat charter and excursion cruises and the construction of an 800 linear foot boardwalk and water's edge observation deck built on the north side of the wharf in the



25 footprint of historic "T" wharf. Completion of this ambitious project will make Long Wharf the focal point of the public waterfront and will put in place the final important link in the "Walk To The Sea" stretching back to Government Center.

25 In addition, a key segment linking the Harbor Towers/The New England Aquarium on Central Wharf and Rowes Wharf projects, has been completed, making possible continuous public access along the downtown waterfront from the Northern Avenue Bridge to Commercial Wharf, a distance of over 1.5 miles.

Significant progress has also been made in the planning of Harborwalk. In order to assist developers in the planning and construction of the walkway system, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) is formulating design guidelines for the Inner Harbor area of Harborwalk. These guidelines, to be published in 1989, detail current conditions, goals and objectives, design standards, and Harborwalk concepts. The BRA will also develop an attractive and comprehensive signage system which will enrich the experience of Harborwalk by orienting the public to the various recreational, educational, and cultural elements of the walkway system as well as provide information on waterfront events and history of the area, creating a sense of unity and place.

#### A Public/Private Venture

26 Harborwalk will provide public access to the Harbor and all areas of the waterfront whether publicly or privately owned. Although the planning and implementation of Harborwalk is guided by the Boston Redevelopment Authority,





much of the responsibility for implementing Harborwalk will be carried by the private property owners of waterfront parcels. The maintenance of the Harborwalk will be undertaken by the public and private owners of the various segments of the walkway system.

### The Process for Achieving Public Access

The Harborpark program's public access goals are being accomplished through a variety of ways: by protecting existing open spaces through zoning; by working with developers, neighborhood councils/organizations, the Boston Parks and Recreation Department and other public agencies to identify, plan, and implement improvements and repairs to existing open spaces; and by working with developers to ensure that waterfront projects include appropriate amounts and types of well-designed, functional open spaces.



## EXPANDING THIS MIXED-USE ECONOMY

Another mandate of the Harborwalk program is to encourage and ensure a balanced and compatible mix of uses on this waterfront. Today, deteriorating buildings and warehouses are being carefully rehabilitated and abandoned piers and wharves are supporting new and attractive homes, parks, maritime uses, offices, hotels, and public attractions. This process is ensuring that the waterfront will include the vitality and diversity that adds to the character of urban life, while adding jobs and activities and supplying much needed housing (especially affordable) and office space to support this expanding Boston economy. Although much of the harbor's identity lies in that it is a unique neighborhood in itself, it is also a component of the greater whole of this city's mixed-use economy.

The waterfront's combination of proximity to the downtown, public transit facilities, and its mix of low-scale and historically significant buildings, ocean views and atmosphere make it an extremely attractive place to live, work, play, and visit. Including a balanced mix of maritime, residential, commercial, recreational, and public uses along the entire waterfront will ensure that the harbor will be an active and exciting place around the clock, and a lively and exciting resource for all of Boston's residents and visitors to enjoy.

The challenge to developers, citizens, and the BRA and other public agencies involved in waterfront development is to ensure that this development is properly channeled, phased, and designed, to guarantee compatible and coherent land uses, appropriate heights, massing, and density of buildings, integrated construction schedules, maximum public benefits, and minimal disruption to the natural and



built environment. If properly planned and developed, the waterfront can regain its status as a critical component the City of Boston; an example of innovative public/private cooperation, and a valuable resources and legacy to the people of Boston for generations to come.

Through its innovative zoning initiatives and its creative design guidelines, the Harborpark Plan seeks to ensure the realization of this exciting mixed-use community on the waterfront. These strategies are being implemented in all of the harbor neighborhoods and are already yielding impressive results.

#### The Charlestown Navy Yard

The Navy Yard was purchased by the BRA from the U.S. Government in 1974. It is located on 105 acres on the Charlestown waterfront. The Navy Yard is a microcosm of the entire Harborpark program. The formerly inaccessible and deteriorating military complex, is undergoing a metamorphosis into a carefully planned mixed-use community of housing, office space, open space and recreational facilities, marinas, and public attractions, providing extensive employment opportunities, both construction and permanent, and public benefits such as affordable housing, linkage, and taxes).

The project, consisting of a unique blend of new construction and historic rehabilitation is now approximately 40% completed and contains: 681 housing units of which 121 are affordable, 800,000 square feet of office and retail space, 350 marina slips, and the 16-acre shipyard park/Pier 4 public open space complex. The Navy Yard project should be completed in the mid-1990s, and based on a carefully thought out master plan prepared with assistance from the Charlestown and harbor committees, will contain over 1,800 housing units, 25% of them



affordable, 2.0 million square feet of office and retail space, 500 marina spaces and over 30 acres of open space and public recreation facilities.

It is projected that at completion this site will support over 4,000 residents, 8,000 permanent employees and will generate over \$10 million in annual property taxes to the City of Boston.

### Rowes Wharf

Rowes Wharf, completed in 1987 by the Beacon Companies, has been cited as a sterling example of realizing the goals of the Harborpark program. The project itself is a diverse mix of housing, office spaces, open space, a hotel, and public water edge uses. The distinctive brick granite, and copper materials reflect those used in traditional Boston wharf construction, while the massing and height, stepped back from this water's edge, respect and enhance the views and natural environment of the harbor while the streetscape reaches up to connect with the adjacent Financial District. The site includes extensive open space, is entirely ringed by a very attractive section of Harborwalk, and includes a striking 10-story arch cut through the center of the building, opening up unique and exciting access and views to the harbor.

Products of similar style, with the mixed-use, design, open space, and public benefit components encouraged by the Harborpark program are under construction or planned at Tudor Wharf on the Charlestown waterfront, and Sargent, Lewis, Burroughs, and Battery Wharfs on the North End waterfront.





Based on current estimates, the projects now completed, under construction, or planned on the Boston waterfront are expected to create over 5,000 housing units, approximately 1,000 of them affordable, 6.0 million square feet of office and retail space, which would support approximately 2,000 employees, approximately 1,500 hotel rooms, extensive amounts of public space and recreational opportunities, marina and boating facilities, water transportation terminals and facilities, and public attractions/artworks.

These projects will generate extensive additional public benefits in terms of employment opportunities, construction and permanent, linkage funds to develop additional affordable housing, and tax dollars to improve public facilities and city services.

The design guidelines governing the planning and construction of these projects will ensure that these developments respect the natural environment and character of the waterfront as a special place, reflect the tradition and heritage of the waterfront's unique architecture and maximize public access to, and enjoyment of, the waterfront by the people of Boston.



## THE MARITIME ECONOMY

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Much of Boston's rich history and economic legacy is related to the city's physical and functional role as a seaport and a center of maritime industry. From the colonial era of the trade economy with England, the Indies, and the Orient, through the days of the beauty and power of Donald McCay's clipperships, and to the present day of modern shipping and manufacturing, Boston has always depended on its maritime economy. Despite the decline of its maritime industry much of the vitality, life, and character of Boston Harbor is still generated by the people and activities of its "working waterfront": fishing and lobster boats hauling in their catch, container ships nosing through the shipping channel, sturdy tug boats chugging across the harbor, and the busy activities of ship repair facilities are still a large part of Boston's waterfront community.

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One of the foremost challenges of the Harborpark program will be its ability to protect and preserve the job opportunities and revenue provided by the maritime economy in conjunction with the development of a modern mixed-use waterfront. The principal tool for protecting this critical component of the waterfront was the implementation of the maritime economy reserve zone (or MER). This action, in the form of an amendment to the City of Boston Zoning Code, will serve to preserve and protect sites across the entire waterfront that will only be allowed to be used for specific maritime industrial or water-dependent uses. The Maritime Economy Reserve zoning amendments were enacted by the zoning commission on August 30, 1988 and October 12, 1988.



Permitted uses in the Maritime Economy Reserve Zone include:

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- o Marine terminals and related structures for the transfer between ship and shore of passengers and goods transported in waterborne commerce.
  - o Facilities associated with marine terminals for the storage of goods transported in waterborne commerce.
  - o Manufacturing facilities relying on the bulk receipt or shipment of goods by waterborne commerce.
  - o Wharves, piers, docks, processing and storage facilities for the commercial fishing industry.
  - o Dry docks and other facilities related to the construction, serving, storage, maintenance or repair of vessels and other marine structures.
  - o Other docks, wharves, berths, dolphins, or mooring facilities for tow boats, barges, dredges, ferries, commuter boats, water buses, water taxis or other vessels engaged in waterborne commerce, port operations, or marine construction.

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More than over 660 acres, approximately 30 percent of the Boston waterfront, were designated as maritime economy reserve zones at 27 sites in Charlestown, South Boston, and East Boston. The goals and objectives set forth through the establishment of this special zoning district include:

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- o Maintaining, fostering and promoting of the maritime economy within Boston Harbor.
  - o Preserving specific sites for Maritime industrial use, particularly for the ocean borne carriage of goods and passengers.
  - o Protecting against the encroachment of uses that threaten the continued viability of maritime operations in Boston Harbor.
  - o Promoting and ensuring maritime land development that will protect the public health and general welfare within a safe and clean environment.
  - o Reserving appropriate but now vacant waterfront sites for further expansion of the maritime economy.

The Maritime Economy Reserve was established after extensive research and planning by the Boston Redevelopment Authority with assistance from other public



and private agencies and companies concerned with waterfront development, including the Massachusetts Port Authority, the City of Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, and the Boston Shipping Association. In addition, a lengthy and comprehensive community input and public hearing process was carried out before the amendment was adopted. This process included contacting and meeting with all proposed and affected property owners in the MER zone areas, public hearing with the Harborpark Advisory Committee, waterfront business community, and neighborhood councils and citizens of all the harbor neighborhoods, and public hearings before the Boston Redevelopment Authority Board of Directors and City of Boston Zoning Commission, prior to the amendment's adoption. Criteria for inclusion to the Maritime Economy Reserve zone include:

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- o An area adjacent to or have within it navigable channels of 12 feet depth at mean low water.
  - o Tidelands and associated lands that by their topography, size and relationship to residential neighborhoods are suited for maritime-dependent industrial uses.

If the property is currently being or has within the last five years been used for maritime-dependent industrial uses, then the requirements shall be deemed to have been met. The sites and functions designated as Maritime Economy Reserve Zones under the Zoning amendment include:

Charlestown:

The deep water shipping warehouses at Mystic Pier #1 and Charlestown Piers 48-50, as well as the Catalano Brothers trucking site and United States Gypsum facility.





The 100 acre fully-modernized Moran Shipping Terminal on the Mystic River, a facility that accommodates over 222,222 tons of goods valued at over \$22,222 million per year.

The Charlestown Commerce Center (home to various small manufacturing companies and shipping and receiving activities), the shipping center of the Atlantic Cement Company, and the shipping receiving warehouse facility of Somerville Lumber.

The 22 acre Revere Sugar plant, closed in 1986 and purchased by Massport, currently being leased by the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority for a barge/transfer site during the Boston Harbor cleanup project.

The 20 acre American Sugar Plant, closed in 1988, but recently purchased by Harold Brown, who is seeking maritime industrial and water dependent tenants for the site.

132.6 total acres of the Charlestown Waterfront are included in the Maritime Economy Reserve zone.

#### East Boston:

The Boston Shipyard and General Ship repair facility, who continue to receive both government and private ship repair contracts.



The Boston Fuel and Transportation and Boston Tow Boat sites, the thriving headquarters for Boston's tug boat and shipping support industry.

The Ganter/Ellis and Perin/Bay State dredging facilities who operate maritime heavy industry headquarters in the harbor.

The Hess Oil and Mobil Oil storage and pumping facilities which supply the region with heating oil and natural gas energy.

75.8 total acres of the East Boston Waterfront are included in the Maritime Economy Reserve zone.

#### South Boston:

The Boston Fish Pier, newly remodeled, and home to one of the regions largest and most profitable fishing fleets.

The General Ship Corporation, one of Boston's oldest and most successful ship building and ship repair facilities.

The Boston Marine Industrial Park, owned and operated by the City of Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, it is home to numerous maritime industrial and manufacturing facilities, including the shipping/storage facility for all Subaru automobiles entering New England.



The Coastal Cement Company, a Spanish-owned firm that produces and distributes cement.

The Black Falcon Cruise Terminal, owned and operated by Massport, this is Boston newest and largest tourist excursion boat terminals, capable of accommodating the Queen Elizabeth II.

The 23 acre Edison Power Plant and 20 acre MBTA Power Plant, located off the reserve shipping channel, and producing energy for the regions electric and transportation needs.

The 13 acre Texaco Oil shipping storage facility headquarters.

The 19 acre Conley Terminal, operated by Massport, the city's second largest modernized shipping terminal which last year handled over 4,444 tons of cargo valued at \$444 million, including Toyota vehicles shipped from Japan.

347.2 total acres of the South Boston Waterfront are included in the Maritime Economic Reserve zone.

The regulations adopted under the Maritime Economy Reserve Zone zoning amendment will go far towards ensuring the continued viability and growth of Boston' maritime industry that has been so important to the economic base, tradition, and character of the city as an employer and a seaport.



Enactment of this maritime economy reserve zone zoning amendment is one of the most important and far-reaching accomplishments of the Harborpark Program, and is testament to the creativity, effort, and dedication of the Harborpark Advisory Committee, waterfront property owners, neighborhood residents, and public and private planners and officials who cooperated to create and explain the initiative and fight for its adoption and implementation.











